Howland Wood - Curatorial

Appleton, William Sumner
[Boston, MA]

1923

PRESIDENT
CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON
TREASURER
WILLIAM C. ENDICOTT
COR. SECRETARY
WM. SUMNER APPLETON

REC. SECRETARY
ALBERT THORNDIKE
LIBRARIAN
GEORGE PARKER WINSHIP
DIRECTOR OF MUSEUM
PHILLIP L. SPALDING

2 LYNDE STREET
BOSTON 14
TELEPHONE HAYMARKET 734

April 20, 1923.

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway & 156th Street,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Wood:

It is many years since I have had occasion to write to you on numismatic matters but if you don't mind I would like to refer to you something which I have just been corresponding with Mr. Harry Gray about, and it turns out that he cannot answer.

I am planning for the magazine of our Society an article on two medals which were recently given us. Enclosed is the article and you will notice that I lack the name of the designer and his address and also the name and address of the firm that cast the bronze medal issued on the occasion of the opening of the Hampton County Memorial Bridge. If you can supply this information I shall be very glad to have it. I have also omitted the size of this medal and of that issued by the Hartford Fire Insurance Company. Mr. Gray tells me that the metric system may be used or the American in sixteenths of an inch. According to this last my scale makes these medals as follows: Hampton County 2 7/16", the Hartford 3 15/16". I wonder if these tally with your measurements?

In conclusion let me say that I shall be very glad to have you read my article and blue pencil it mercilessly wherever you think necessary. It is my first attempt to write on a numismatic subject and doubtless is bad accordingly.

I was in New York not long ago and went over the Heye museum, one or two rooms of the Hispanic (the balance was closed) and found the front door of your building securely locked. I was particularly sorry because I had hoped to find you in and have a few words about old times in Boston.

Thanking you in advance for any assistance you can give me, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Wm Sumner Appleton
Corresponding Secretary

April 23rd, 1923.

Mr. William Sumner Appleton,
2 Lynde Street,
Boston, 14, Mass.

Dear Mr. Appleton:

I think you have done very well with the descriptions of the two medals. I have supplied you the missing data for the Hampden County medal. The other one we do not have, but I think you have all of its details.

We use here millimeters, but I think for your case inches in sixteenths would be better.

We probably were changing our exhibition for the exhibition of sculpture that is now on the terrace, and that is the reason you found our building locked. However, I wish you had rung the bell becuase you could then have gotten in unless it was after five o'clock.

Trusting you will try again, I am,

Very truly yours,

Curator.

PRESIDENT
CHARLES KNOWLES BOLTON
TREASURER
WILLIAM C. ENDICOTT
COR. SECRETARY
WM. SUMNER APPLETON

REC. SECRETARY
ALBERT THORNDIKE
LIBRARIAN
GEORGE PARKER WINSHIP
DIRECTOR OF MUSEUM
PHILLIP L. SPALDING

2 LYNDE STREET
BOSTON 14
TELEPHONE HAYMARKET 734

April 30, 1923.

Mr. Howland Wood,
American Numismatic Society,
Broadway between 155th & 156th Sts.,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Wood:

I am sorry to bother you again with reference to this article on two medals which I am planning for our magazine. There are, however, three points I would like to bring up. The first of these I am sorry to say concerns my scandalous illiteracy, for I am unable to make out whether you wrote that the Hampton County Memorial Bridge was designed by Allen or Allan G. Newman. You certainly wrote that the Whitehead & Hoag Company is of Newark, N. Y. While I suppose such a thing is possible it occurs to me that it may be that was an error for N. J.

Allen

Finally, concerning the medal of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company; I find that it is exactly 100 m.m. in diameter and wonder whether it is customary in that case to write it in that form or as one decimeter, and if the latter form is to be used how is decimeter abbreviated?

There is still a third medal in our collection which I would be inclined to describe but feel incompetent to do. This is doubtless a medal with which you are well acquainted. On the obverse is a bust of Washington to the left surrounded by an olive wreath and the words "He is in Glory, the world in tears." On the reverse is an urn bearing the initials "G.W." and enough letters and dates to make a Roman Imperial inscription. I thought that a line concerning this medal would let people know that we are in line to accept the gift of such material, but for the life of me wouldn't know how to go ahead and describe it. Doubtless it has been well written up and printed in some accessible form to which you can refer me. Or isn't it worth mentioning at all perhaps. It was a hole at the top.

Also
How is one m. m. written
mm or
m. m. or
M. M. or just what
is customary.

Sincerely yours,

Wm Sumner Appleton

Corresponding Secretary

May 4th, 1923

Mr. William Sumner Appleton
2 Lynde Street
Boston, 14, Mass.

Dear Mr. Appleton:

Referring to your letter of April 30th, I think I can easily put you right with regard to the three questions you ask.

Newman's name is Allen not Allen.
Whitehead & Hagg Company is in New Jersey. I must have slipped badly when I said New York.
The word Millimetre is generally abbreviated - mm. (period after the mm). In numismatics, decimeter is never used.

Your Washington medal is known as the Washington Funeral Medal. It is said that they were worn in the funeral ceremonies held at Boston shortly after his death. There are a number of varieties. I would suggest your describing it as follows -

Obv. bust of Washington in uniform, facing left, within a laurel wreath - and then give the legend. Rev. a funeral urn inscribed G.W. - and the legend which, as you say, looks like a Roman inscription. Then state the metal because they come in gold, silver, copper and tin.

Trusting the above answers your questions satisfactorily,

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW/E